VI

A YEAR WITH THE BANCROFTS

MY engagement with the Bancrofts lasted a little over a year. After Portia there was nothing momentous about it. I found Clara Douglas difficult, but I enjoyed playing her. I found Mabel Vane easy, and I enjoyed playing her, too, although there was less to be proud of in my success, here. Almost any one could have “ walked in " to victory on such very simple womanly emotion as the part demanded. At this time friends who had faEen In love with Portia used to gather at the Prince of Wales's and applaud me in a manner more vigorous than judicious. It was their fault that it got about that I had hired a claque to clap me ! Now, it seems funny, but at the time I was deeply, hurt at the insinuation, and it cast a shadow over whab %ould otherwise have been a very happy time. -jV

It is the .way of the;piiblic sometimes, to keep all their enthusiasm'-"for an actress who is doing well In a minor part, and tb> ^StiiKold' it from the actress who is playing the leading part. I don't say for a minute that Mrs. Bancroft's Peg Woffirigton in " Masks and Faces " was not appreciated and applauded, but I know that my Mabel Vane was received with a warmth out of all proportion to tie merits of my performance, and that this angered some of Mrs. Bancroft's admirers, and made them the bearers of